

THE PRESIDING OFFICER OF THE SENATE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, first I thank our Presiding Officer, the Senator from New Jersey. He always has a clean desk. What does that mean? That means he is paying attention to what is going on in the Senate. He is not at the desk reading a magazine or a piece of paper, a newspaper. He is alert. I watched him. This is the way he always presides. That is the way Presiding Officers ought to conduct themselves when gracing that desk in this, the greatest legislative, parliamentary, deliberative body in the world.

He does it with a great dignity and style. I thank him. He sits there many evenings at this hour when most Senators have gone on their separate ways. I thank him.

I thank the other Members of the new class—I say it in that fashion—who have worked at that desk. There are some of them—I will not call their names at the moment—who make me proud of the Senate. The fact is, the way they preside is a model for legislative bodies everywhere to watch. Too often as we sit in that chair, we forget that millions of people are watching the Senate. They are watching the Chair.

I have been a member of the State legislature in West Virginia and the West Virginia House of Delegates. Those people in the State legislatures watch the Presiding Officer of this body.

This is the premier upper house in the world. They should see the premier act of presiding on the part of the Senator who sits at that desk. Teachers, college professors, students, political column writers, and editorialists watch. We ought to remember that when we are sitting in that chair.

I congratulate the Presiding Officer. I congratulate Senator CORZINE. I thank him.

GLORIA GILLESPIE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, as we head toward Christmas and the close of this session of Congress and this turbulent and tragic first year of the new millennium, I want to pause to remember a young woman who passed away this summer. Gloria Margaret Gillespie was a friend of mine.

Many Members of the Senate and staff will remember Gloria, for she worked in the Senate hair salon for 29 years. She cut my hair. Probably for the first time that my hair was ever cut at that salon she cut—28 years or 29 years ago. She worked there for 29 years.

She loved her work, and she loved her friends and she loved life. Gloria had a cheerful, loyal, uplifting spirit. And her time on this Earth was far, far too brief. She was only 54 years of age when she passed away in Berea, KY, this past July—54.

Five years ago, Gloria began a battle with cancer. She had smoking-related lung cancer. But instead of withdrawing, she used her illness as a forum to warn others about the dangers of smoking.

Gloria did not win her battle with cancer, but to the end, even in the face of great pain, she remained a fighter and a friend to all—someone who loved the Senate and someone who loved life.

Gloria Gillespie knew that each day is a gift. Each day is a gift. She cherished each waking moment. She found great joy in seeing people alive. From childhood, Gloria possessed a deep and abiding faith in God. That strong faith made her courageous and deeply appreciative of the sheer wonder of the world that God created.

Her unflinching optimism was contagious, as was her impish laughter. She brought a special kind of joy to all of her endeavors. She made the load a little lighter for all who knew her.

Gloria is survived by her parents, C.H. and Mary Frances Gillespie of Berea, KY, one niece, Lisa Gillespie, and one nephew, David Gillespie.

Along with all the members of her family and her legions of friends, I shall miss Gloria. But I shall think of her during this Christmas season, and I shall never, never, never forget her.

MARIAN BERTRAM

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I rise to remember a longtime Senate employee who passed away on October 15 of this year. Marian Bertram dedicated 27 years of her life to public service and to the United States Senate. She began her work at the Democratic Policy Committee in 1971, eventually serving as the chief clerk of that committee. She retired from the Senate in October of 1998.

Marian Bertram served four Democratic Leaders, beginning with Mike Mansfield and continuing on through my own tenure as Democratic Leader, George Mitchell's, and Senator DASCHLE's leader terms.

She gained a deep understanding of the Senate's intricacies during those years and researched and wrote the Democratic Policy Committee's Legislative Bulletin. She also shouldered the challenging task of producing voting records and vote analyses for Democratic Members.

Marian was an able and very dedicated Senate employee and through it all she was unflinching good humored and professional.

My sympathy goes out to her many friends in the Washington area who were shocked and saddened by her untimely death this fall. We shall remember her with great affection and with thanks for the many years she gave so unselfishly to this institution.

SENATORS AND SENATE LEADERS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, let me say just a word or so before I make my final speech of this year. I thank all Senators on both sides of the aisle for the work they do on behalf of this great Nation. They work here at a sacrifice. We are paid well, but there are many here who could earn much more money in other fields. There are many who come here after earning much more money in other fields but who want to give something to the Nation, who want to serve. Here is the place—in this Chamber—where Senators, since 1859, have served the Nation.

So I salute all Senators. I salute the leaders of the Senate—our Democratic and Republican leaders of the majority and the minority.

I have been a majority leader. I have been a minority leader. I have been a majority whip. I know the kinds of problems with which they are confronted every day. I know the demands that are made upon them by their colleagues. I know of the expectations that surround this Chamber and the expectations of our leaders. They spend a lot of time protecting our interests and working on behalf of our interests. They spend many hours here when the rest of us are probably sleeping. They carry to their beds problems that we don't know about. Many demands are made on these leaders.

I sit here and I hear criticism of our majority leader. He is the majority leader and was chosen by his colleagues for this job. He sets the schedule. He decides the program.

So not only do I salute him for the great work that he does on behalf of the Nation every day, but I also have empathy with him. I know he must go home troubled at night—troubled because he could not fulfill the expectations of this Senator, or that Senator, troubled because he is sometimes unjustly criticized. I had all of these things happen to me.

So I thank TOM DASCHLE. He can't be everything to everybody. He has to do what he has to do. He has to do what he thinks is best. He has to promote the interests of the Senate. He has to promote the interests of getting on with the work.

So does our majority whip. These are two fine Senators. There isn't a Senator here who doesn't think that he could do that job right there better—that majority leader's job. Every Senator thinks he can do it better. Every Senator thinks he can do the whip's job better. But they do the best they can.

I want to pray for them in this season that we are entering. I want them to know that we Senators, upon reflection, cannot help but thank them for the work they do.

Somebody has to do this so we can leave the Senate when our speeches are made and go home. But they have to stay.